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ABSTRACT

One in a series of booklets for Hispanic American parents on making the most of a child's education, this volume encourages parents to think about and decide whether college is a good option for their child. It offers practical advice and information to face the educational challenges confronting children. Section 1 looks at why a child should think about college, including why a college education is important, whether college is really reasonable for that individual, and whether the child looks forward to going to college. Section 2 explores the parents' role in helping to prepare their children for college. A chart sets out the parents' role at different stages in a child's life from the elementary school grades through high school grades. This section also discusses the importance of offering advice and actively helping the student, including what to do if children are not doing what they need to do to prepare themselves for college, and dealing with a student who wants to go to college away from home. This chapter also looks at what to expect from the first year of college, including personal and cultural challenges that will confront the student and the student's family. Appended are additional sources of help including financial aid. Contains eight references. (JB)

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Making the Most of Your Child's Education Volume III: WHAT ABOUT COLLEGE?

Book I: Preparing for College

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Prepared for the ASPIRA Hispanic Opportunities through Parent Educational Support (High HOPES) Project

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The Hispanic Opportunities through Parent Educational Support (High HOPES) Project is funded by the Philip Morris Companies.

Making the Most of Your Child's Education Volume III: WHAT ABOUT COLLEGE?

Book I: Preparing for College

Prepared for the ASPIRA Hispanic Opportunities through Parent Educational Support (High HOPES) Project

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Forward

ASPIRA knows the power of a group of parents who have confidence in their own ability to create change. ASPIRA has helped develop that ability in Latino youth and families for over three decades.

Under the **Community Mobilization for Educational Excellence (COMEX)** initiative, ASPIRA began a full compliment of programs which forged stronger relationships between Latino families, their communities, and local educators. COMEX programs include **Teachers, Organizations, and Parents for Students (TOPS), Hispanic Opportunities through Parent Educational Support (High HOPES)** and **ASPIRA Parents for Educational Excellence (APEX).**

The **High HOPES** project provides the opportunity to introduce a third volume in ASPIRA's series of parent guides called, *Making the Most of Your Child's Education.* This newest volume gives advice and guidance to parents in promoting and planning for their children's access to higher education.

For further information on the High HOPES project contact:

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About These Guides

Through ASPIRA's programs, we have published these guides to help parents get involved in and improve their children's education. Volume I, *Making the Most of Your Child's Education: A Guide for Parents*, was created to offer practical advice to Latino parents on how to help their children's educational and developmental success in elementary through high school years. Volume II in the series, *Making the Most of Your Child's Education: More Topics for Parents*, gives more ideas on what parents can do to make schools in their community better.

The High HOPES project provided the opportunity to develop a third volume in the series, *Making the Most of Your Child's Education: What About College?*, based on the same approach used in these other highly successful parent involvement materials. This latest three-part publication gives parents good advice on what you can do for your child's college career.

The *Making the Most of Your Child's Education Volume III: What About College?* series consists of three books:

Book I - Preparing for College - Encourages you to think about college and decide whether college is a good option for your child.

Book II - Planning for College - Provides specific information through which you can assist your child to:

(a) academically prepare for college;
(b) choose the "right" college;
(c) apply to college.

Book III - Paying for College - Helps calm one of the biggest fears about college -- how to pay for it -- by providing various ways in which you and your child can apply for and obtain financial assistance.

Our goal is to give you practical advice and information to face the educational challenges confronting your children. These booklets will help you begin taking the necessary steps so that some day you can proudly watch your child receive a college degree and begin a bright and successful future.

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Congratulations! You almost certainly can be the proud parent of a college student!

"Who, me?" you may ask. "But my daughter just gets average grades. My son doesn't know what he wants to do. My family isn't rich--we could never afford college. No one has ever gone to college in our family."

All the same, <u>you</u> can be the proud parent of a college student.

Just the fact that you are reading this booklet shows that you are interested. Remember: Without planning, almost no one can go to college. But with planning, <u>anybody</u> can.

To keep things simple, we say "parent" in these books, but we mean all of you who are the guardians of our children.

To make these books more personal, we alternate talking about "him" and "her" in our chapters instead of "them".

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Section One: Why Should My Child Think About College?

- Why is college important?
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Chapter 1: Why is College Important?

Mrs. Fernández has four children. When she moved here with her family from Puerto Rico, she had to join together with other parents in her community to get the school to provide the bilingual support their children needed. Now she can feel proud that her two oldest have graduated from high school. The oldest one, though, struggles to find a permanent job. The second, her daughter, has a wonderful husband with a steady job, but his salary is barely enough to support their small family. Mrs. Fernández thinks of her third child, Anibal, who is still in high school. What will his future be like? She wonders: for today's jobs, is high school enough?

Like most caring parents, you want the best for your child. You made sure your child went to school and helped him all the way through. Now that he's growing up, it's time to start thinking about his future, and that often means college.

Why is college so important? Few people of our generation went to college. When we were growing up, our parents thought it was wonderful if we finished high school. And it was! With a high school diploma we could get a good job that paid pretty well. Even without a diploma, people in our communities could still support their families.

Our children today, though, will be living in the 21st century--an exciting but also a difficult time for Latinos and for our whole country. Here are a few facts about why we think the 21st century will be so important for our children and our community:

Latinos will be the largest minority group in the country in the next century. And we will all want to work in good jobs!

- **First,** it is a fact that the Latino community is increasing! Already nearly one in eight U.S. school children is Latino. That means that in the next few decades there will be many Latinos just like your son or daughter, finishing high school and college and getting their first jobs.

- **Second,** it is a fact that those good jobs in industries that used to support our communities will continue to disappear. This will leave two kinds of jobs.

  The first kind are the service jobs at the lower end of the pay scale. These are the sorts of jobs your child might have now: working in fast food restaurants, clerking at stores, waiting tables, daycare, security guards, etc. If you or someone you know has worked in one of these service jobs, you know that the pay isn't always good, the hours

can be bad, and there is less job security. Although many people do it, it can be very hard to raise a family with this kind of job.

The other kind of jobs are the ones that graduates of colleges or trade schools get. These are higher-paying, challenging, more secure jobs for people who have more education and have developed special skills that make them more valuable in the job market. Jobs like these pay better than most service jobs, the hours tend to be more regular, there is less of a chance that workers will be laid off, and there are more possibilities of advancing to a better job.

So, if you want your child to improve his future, nothing beats going to college.

On average, college graduates earn over two-and-one-half times more than high school graduates.

Also, college graduates report being happier at their jobs and are much more likely to have a job. Having a college degree gives your child more security over his lifetime. He can ask himself, do I like what I'm doing? Do I like where I'm working? A college education will give your child the flexibility to change career directions to what is best for him.

Did you know that women make up more than half of Hispanic and all other college students in the 1990's?

Sometimes it's especially hard for parents of girls to feel comfortable with the idea of their daughters going to college. Some families may think that their daughters don't need a college education as much as their sons, or that people will tease their daughters if they're in college.

In today's society both men and women need to earn an income in order to support themselves and their families. As long as your daughter will need to work, why not ensure that she gets a good job by encouraging her to go to college?

Finally, besides all these reasons to go to college, keep in mind that our community needs all our children to achieve the most they possibly can--they are our future!

Discussion Questions

1. Ask group members to name as many jobs as they can think of. Which jobs would they encourage their children to have? Do these jobs require a college education?

2. Besides financial ones, what other benefits are there for going to college?

Chapter 2: Is College Really for My Child?

Sonia Mendoza works as a secretary supporting herself and her younger sister, Rosita. Rosita is in ninth grade and living with Sonia because she and her parents think opportunities are better for Rosita in the United States. Today when Sonia comes home from work, Rosita announces excitedly that she wants to go to college to study mathematics. Like she always does, Sonia encourages her to do her best. That evening, though, as she sits in the living room, she wonders. Should Rosita go to college? No one else in the family ever has. Will it pull her away from her family, her heritage? Is Rosita smart enough to go to college, or will she just disappoint herself? She looks around their little apartment, worrying. How will they ever be able to afford it?

We talked in the last chapter about why college is so important. We did this because many families worry if college is the right choice. Because going to college is such a big step, sometimes children (and their parents) can convince themselves that they just aren't "college material." Don't be led to believe some things that simply aren't true!

Remember: Higher education is not only for straight-A students or rich kids.

With proper planning, the average student can do well in college. If necessary, your child can work and go to college at the same time. Don't believe the following myths:[1]

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT COLLEGE

A college education is available for wealthier families, but it is a luxury for most Hispanic youth. Not so! Going to college makes more economic sense than any other option, such as enlisting directly in the military or going straight into a job after high school. Also, many colleges want to enroll those Hispanic students whose families have a limited income.

High scores on college-entrance tests are an absolute requirement for college admission. This is a common misunderstanding. If your child does very well on these tests, she will have the chance to receive special scholarships or go to the very best schools. However, if she does not do well, she is not locked out of college! Some

[1]Thanks in part to Gary D. Keller, "College is for You and You are for College."

colleges do not require the tests at all, and most others will also look at your child's grades and interests as well as her test scores. Many colleges have a special admissions program for students who had to attend poor public schools. These students are accepted to college because they can show the school that they have a goal in mind and are willing to work hard.

College and work can't be combined. This is not true--college work-study and cooperative education are good alternatives. These are programs that the school sets up to allow students to work part-time, often in the field they are studying. Many college students work to help support themselves, and many earn more money than they would if they were not in college.

Most Hispanic students who are eligible to go to college actually attend. This may be the worst myth of all. Only a fraction of Hispanic students in the United States who could attend college are actually going. However, their numbers are growing all the time. There are now about 758,000 Latino students on college campuses across the country--and over half of them are women!

You may be worried that your child will feel out of place on a particular college campus. Depending on what college your child chooses, she might find herself one of the few Latino students on campus. Latino and other minority children may want to pay particular attention to the "fit" between themselves

and the college. College isn't easy for anyone. As a Latino student your child may need more support not to feel isolated or pressured to fit in with the crowd.

When your child is investigating colleges, she also should look into how many Latino students and faculty are at the schools she's interested in, and if they have clubs or other activities for Latino students. Schools that don't have a variety of students can be unresponsive and lonely places for minority students. Campuses that have students from many cultures are more likely to welcome differences among people. The good news is that with the growing numbers of Latino and other minority students, campuses are becoming more diverse all the time.

You also may be worried that your child isn't academically prepared for college. Unfortunately, many Latino children who are in low-income neighborhoods have to attend schools that aren't as good as other schools. Even when your child does her best in high school, her college may expect skills from her that she never had a chance to learn. Latino students say that

academic problems are the number one reason they drop out of college. The good news here is that many colleges have excellent tutoring programs and other academic support programs.

Services can include:

- tutoring and remedial services;
- counseling services staffed by other minority students and professionals; and
- financial aid services that help students over short-term money crises.

Many colleges want to increase the number of minority students they have on their campuses. Therefore, they should be providing the support your child will need to succeed in college, and many are.

However, the only way to make sure that a particular school has these kinds of services is to visit the campus. Don't depend on someone else's word, see for yourself!

Discussion Questions

Ask members of the group:

1. Have you thought about college for your children? Why or why not?

2. Is it ever too early to start thinking about college? Why not?

Chapter 3: Does My Child Want to Go to College?

Mr. Vargas' son, Luis, has always liked school. Mr. Vargas hopes that he will be the first in the family to get a college education. But now that Luis is in high school, he doesn't talk much about his future plans. It seems that he likes to play basketball with his friends more than talking with his father about his future. Mr. Vargas doesn't want to push Luis into something he doesn't want, but he does think they should talk. He wonders how he should begin a conversation with Luis about college. What should they talk about?

Any one of several hundred colleges in the United States will admit your child once he has his high school diploma. In other words, higher education is then easily within reach. So whether your child can get into college is not the issue. More important is <u>why</u> he wants to go.

If your child is a high school student looking forward to the end of his studies, maybe college doesn't sound too attractive. It means several more years of school and it keeps him from getting a job right away. It also might seem scary. You might not know too many other friends, family members, or neighbors who have gone to college.

Have you and your child ever talked about college or his future? Perhaps he has a hard time saying why he does or doesn't want to go to college. Perhaps you worry that he doesn't seem to have any definite plans. Young people often find it hard to make decisions. They need your help to state their reasons for undertaking such a major step in their lives. Talking with your child is a good way to start his thinking about the decisions he needs to make.

Let's look more closely at the reasons most children give for wanting to go to college.[2] Do any of these remind you of your child?

	Reasons for going to college
To get a better job	To most people, a college degree means a higher income, a job that offers more opportunities for growth and challenge, and a more satisfying work life. Your child is being practical if getting a better job is his reason for wanting to go to college.
To make contacts that can be important later in life	College is an important place for your child to get to know people who can help him with his career. Professors serve as job references, classmates share job opportunities, and college friends can help each other when they are both professionals.
To learn to get along with different people	Colleges intentionally introduce young people to a variety of cultures and values and help them expand their view of the world. This will be an important skill in the more diverse workplace of the future.
To learn how to think critically	To develop thinking skills is the most important purpose of college. In high school, teachers told students what to do and supervised their work. In college, professors will teach your child to solve problems on his own, organize information, and complete work by himself.

[2]Thanks in part to Charles J. Shields, "The College Guide for Parents."

	Reasons for going to college
To help friends, family, and community	The Latino community needs educated leaders who want to give something back to their people. At ASPIRA, we believe that our youth are the greatest treasure we have. If this is one of your child's reasons for going to college, then he may be one of those treasured leaders.
To please parents	Maybe your child tells you he wants to go to college to please you. This shows that he respects your opinions, and you can be proud of that. But pleasing you should never be your child's only reason for going to college. By the time he is 18 or 19 years old, your child needs to begin forming his own goals in life. Doing things just to please you keeps your child dependent. It also makes it too easy for him to blame you if things don't go the way he wants!
To have fun	Obviously, having fun should not be the only reason your child has for going to college. However, colleges know that making friends and joining fun activities are an important balance to studying. Not having enough fun things to do with their classmates is a major reason students change colleges. College campuses provide many social activities for their students, and the friendships your child makes can last his entire life.

After you and your child have talked over his reasons for wanting to go to college, he should have a clearer understanding of his goals for his future. These goals will guide his selection of a college. In Volume II, *Planning for College*, we map out the steps you and your child can take to prepare for and select a college. First though, let's look at what your role should be in this process.

Discussion Questions

Ask members of the group:

1. Have any of your children expressed an interest in attending college? If so, what are some of the reasons they gave? If not, why do you think that your children have not expressed interest in college?

2. Do you think you have to talk to your children about college in order to get them interested? Why or why not?

Section Two: What is My Role as a Parent to Help Prepare My Child for College?

- What should *I* do when my child is preparing for college?
- What should I expect from his first year of college?

Chapter 1: What Should *I* Do When My Child is Preparing for College?

Mrs. Pérez and her daughter Angelina have been fighting about college. Angelina welcomed her mother's help to plan her future when she was in ninth and tenth grades. Now, though, Angelina complains that her mother is interfering too much in her life. Mrs. Pérez says that when she leaves her alone, Angelina misses deadlines and acts like she doesn't care about applying for college. Angelina tells her brother that she's decided to go to a college far away, and Mrs. Pérez thinks it's because Angelina is mad at her. How can the two of them work <u>together</u> to prepare Angelina for college?

In Book II, *Making the Most of Your Child's Education: Planning for College*, we spell out in lots of detail what things you should be doing as a parent and what things your child should be doing on her own to get ready for college. **It's important that you both understand that parents <u>and</u> children have responsibilities.**

As the parent, you should mostly share information with her--like the information in these books--and encourage her to take action.

We give you a lot of suggestions about what you and your child can do to prepare for college. In this chapter we're going to just briefly list what you, the parent, can do. If you want to later, you can use this list as a checklist when you read the other two volumes.

When your child is in	You, the parent, should
First through eighth grades	talk to her about her goals and aspirations in life
	encourage her to enjoy learning and participate in school and community activities
	be involved and supportive of her education (see *Making the Most of Your Child's Education Volumes I and II* for more information about how you can be an involved and supporting parent)
	continue all of these activities throughout your child's years in school
Ninth grade	talk to her about college and help her start planning to attend
	encourage her to get good grades and participate in school and community groups
	meet her counselor and tell him or her that your child wants to go to college
	make sure your child takes the classes that prepare her for college work
	check if there are nearby programs that prepare Latino children for college

When your child is in	You, the parent, should
Tenth grade	go to college fairs with your child and help her ask questions of college representatives
Eleventh grade	make sure she signs up for and takes the college admissions tests
	talk with her about what kind of college she wants to go to
	make sure she gets a college handbook to tell her about all the different choices of schools
	encourage her to send away for college catalogues from a number of schools
Twelfth grade	help her check out the various sources of private financial aid (especially through your job and groups you belong to)
	help her to set up her own filing system to keep track of information and applications from schools and from financial aid sources
	help her set a calendar so she doesn't miss any deadlines to turn forms in
	fill out the family sections of the financial aid forms as soon after January 1 as you can
	offer to read over any letters or applications that she writes, or recommend some other adult who can give her advice
	always encourage her and show how excited you are for her to be going to college!

You can also make a big contribution to helping your child make the transition to college by teaching her how to do some practical things before she leaves. Your child will feel a lot less pressure if she can start school knowing how to do laundry, balance a checkbook, clean a bathroom, read a map, do simple repairs, manage her time, etc. These might be things your family can do together to help her get ready the summer before college begins.

How much should I say?

As your child's parent, you should always feel comfortable offering advice. It's important to remember, though, that your child is the one going to college.

As your child's parent, you should always feel comfortable offering advice. Your child may act like she knows everything, but as a high school student she still needs you to be her parent and guide.

Maybe you didn't get so far in school yourself and you think your child knows more about college than you do. However, preparing for college is probably one of the most complicated things your child will ever do. It will help her feel more confident to know that if she needs help she can come to you.

It's important to remember, though, that your child is the one going to college. She may end up picking one school when you

would have picked another. She may want to live on campus when you wanted her to live at home. She may decide she wants to study something that you think is silly. In the end, these are her decisions, because they will affect her life. Of course you should let her know what you think. But the decisions should be hers.

How much should I do?

After reading this book, we hope that you are excited to begin helping your child prepare for college. You probably see a lot that needs to be done. Let your child do what she needs to do to prepare.

Your role as a parent includes four things:

1) **encouraging** your child to take the right steps,
2) **checking** to make sure she follows through,
3) **supporting** her, and
4) **providing** some information to help her (like financial aid information and a college handbook).

Your child's role is to:

1) do well in school,
2) sign up for tests,
3) send away for college catalogues,
4) fill out applications,
5) write financial aid letters, and
6) meet deadlines.

Don't do these things for her! Taking responsibility is a part of growing up.

What if she isn't doing what she needs to do to prepare for college?

The end of high school can be a very difficult time for your child. She wants to be an adult, but more and more she realizes that there will be many new responsibilities for her. Such a big change can be a scary thing for children and their parents. Sometimes, children start to see college preparations as pushing them into responsibilities before they're ready. They try to slow down the process, and can frustrate their parents!

If you can show your child that you understand that this is a hard time for her, it can help her a lot. That is why we say so often **support** and **encourage** your child. Let her know how excited you are for her. Offer your advice when she needs it. Your constant support for the new steps she is taking will help her a lot more than any nagging about what she isn't doing.

How do you support her?

- **By helping her to clearly understand what she should do to prepare for college.**
- **By helping her plan for the deadlines.**
- **By listening.** As always, this is the greatest job of a parent.

Finally, remember again who is going to college--your child is. If she doesn't prepare in time even with all your support, maybe it's not yet time for her to go. If this happens, one alternative you may want to suggest then is that she start at the local community college, where she usually can apply and register for classes even up to the week fall classes are starting.

What if she wants to live away from home?

"Señora Pérez, how is Angelina?" "Oh, she got a scholarship to a college in Colorado, but I told her she should go to our local college instead. How could my baby live so far away from home?"

Could this be you? Often it's really hard to think about our children moving away from home. How will they take care of themselves? Who will watch out for them? Will they still

respect their family? Will they remember their culture? Why wouldn't they want to live at home?

Moving away from home is a difficult choice. However, sometimes it is the best choice for your child.

Maybe the best school for her is in another state. Maybe that school offers her the best financial aid package. Should she really say no just because it is far away?

If your child wants to move away from home to go to college, it does not mean that she loves you any less. Sometimes parents get worried that if their children don't depend on them they won't love or respect them anymore. In fact, most teenagers appreciate their parents more after they try living on their own and realize how many responsibilities there are!

I'm still not sure her moving away is a good idea. What can I do?

If the best school for your child is away from home, here are some ideas that other families have tried:

- If your child has the choice of several good schools, she may want to pick one in a place where a family member or friend lives. That way her aunt, cousin, godparent, or other friend can stay in touch with her. Perhaps she could even live with them.

- Some parents have moved to the town where their child is going to college so they can stay close by.

It's normal to feel sad when you separate from family members and friends. Your child may also be very sad about the idea of being away from family and friends. But it's also a normal part of life. You may be worried about what you will do without her help, or without her to take care of. But good parenting involves letting your child grow to adulthood. Going away to college can be a big step for her on that road. It helps her to appreciate more the specialness of her own community and family, while she learns about others.

If it's important for your child's future that she go away, you may want to try letting her go.

She can always transfer later to a local school if it doesn't work out. And she'll be back home during school vacations, ready to appreciate more her own special family.

Discussion Questions

1. Ask the group to share ideas about places in the community where parents can get information about college to share with their children.

2. Ask group members to discuss why a college away from home might be the best choice for their child.

Chapter 2: What Should I Expect From His First Year of College?

Mr. Colón's grandson, Pedro, has just come home from college for Thanksgiving. Mr. Colón helped his daughter raise Pedro from the time he was a baby. He was always available to help Pedro with his homework and go to his school events. Sending him to college is a sacrifice they are proud to make. At dinner tonight, though, all Pedro can talk about is how much better his life at college is than his life back home. Even worse, he seems to be jumping at every chance to argue with Mr. Colón. It's like he no longer has any respect for his family. If this is what college does to you, thought Mr. Colón, then it's not worth it.

Your child is going through one of the biggest changes in his life when he starts college. What should you expect to happen to him?

First off, expect that he will probably be very excited by his new life. He also may be lonely, confused, and worried.

College involves a lot of changes. College teachers treat students more like adults, which means there is a lot more freedom, and a lot more responsibility. It takes a semester or

two for many students to get used to how much work is expected of them, and how much time they can budget for making new friends and doing fun things.

While many high schools expect students to memorize information, colleges focus more on getting students to think and analyze. This can mean two things for your child:

- **At first, he may not get the good grades he got in high school.** He may think college is "too hard" in the beginning, until he gets used to the college way of studying, asking questions, writing papers, and taking tests. Some students panic at the amount of work they are expected to do in college.

  If your child tells you he can't handle his classes, it can help to remind him that you have confidence in him, and that many college students have a hard time in the beginning. All colleges have support services on their campus--Study Skills Centers, Writing and Math Centers, and Guidance Offices. Encourage your child not to wait but to find out where they are and use them as soon as he starts having problems.

- **He may come home with new ideas and disagree with the family about issues.** This is because college is teaching him to understand things and form his own opinions. He may be unable to accept opinions that are different from his, but that is just a sign of how new his opinions are.

  It can be very frustrating to parents to listen to their child spout strange ideas and insist that he is right. But be patient! Your child is exercising his mind,

and by the end of his college years, he should be a more thoughtful and aware young adult.

As your child gets used to campus life and struggles towards independence, he may not want to admit that he needs you. However, he needs the same support that you gave him all through high school. Stay involved!

Your child needs you to:

- **be interested** in what he is doing. Ask him about his classes and what he is learning. Try to meet some of his friends. Visit the school if you can. Show him your pride in his accomplishments.

- **listen** as he tries to make decisions about his direction in life. As we said, he may go through a lot of strange ideas before deciding what he really believes, but that is normal. Be there for him to talk to and give advice when you think it's necessary, remembering that he doesn't <u>have</u> to take it.

If he's away from home, be the first to call or write. Being busy and young, your child may be terrible at communicating with you. But if he is away from home, letters or phone calls telling him what is happening at home will mean more than you can imagine. Little boxes of his favorite cookies, photos of the family, or other things he likes tell him a lot about how much you care for him, too.

If he's living at home, invite him to take a study break with you occasionally. Make some coffee, go for a walk, and give yourselves a chance to start talking together as two adults.

By the time he finishes his first year of college, you should start to see the new person he is becoming. Take the time to be happy for him, and for you. Your child is on the road to maturity. You can look forward to the years ahead as the parent of this adult son or daughter.

Discussion Questions

Ask the group:

1. What kind of changes may take place when their children go to college?

2. What kind of changes took place in the relationship between them and their children after the children started college?

3. Why is it important to think about and talk about these changes?

Additional Sources for Help Going to College and Finding Financial Aid

The ASPIRA Association and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) are two national Hispanic organizations that provide personal counseling to high school students wanting to go to college. The counselors help students prepare for admissions tests, choose the right school, get through the application process, and pay for college.

If you live in one of the following areas your child can call or go to their local ASPIRA or LULAC office:

ASPIRA Local Offices

ASPIRA of Connecticut, Inc.
P.O. Box 6371
Beardley Station
Bridgeport, CT 06606
203/382-8174

ASPIRA of Florida, Inc.
3650 N. Miami Avenue
Miami, FL 33137
305/576-1512

ASPIRA, Inc. of Illinois
1567 N. Milwaukee Avenue
Chicago, IL 60622
312/252-0970

ASPIRA, Inc. of New Jersey
390 Broad St., 3rd Floor
Newark, NJ 07104
201/484-7554

ASPIRA of New York, Inc.
470 7th Avenue, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10018
212/564-6880

ASPIRA, Inc. of Pennsylvania
526 West Girard Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19123
215/923-2717

ASPIRA, Inc. de Puerto Rico
Apartado 29132
Estación 65 de Infantería
Río Piedras, PR 00929
809/768-1985

LULAC National Educational Service Centers (LNESC)

California
360 East Holt Avenue
Pomona, CA 91767
714/623-0588

5400 East Olympic Blvd.
Suite 245
Los Angeles, CA 90022
213/722-0376

109 Bartlett St., #204
San Francisco, CA 94110
415/206-1155

Colorado
720 N. Main St., #455
Pueblo, CO 81003
719/542-9074

829 North Circle Dr., #101
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
719/637-0037

2701 Alcott, Ste. 382
Denver, CO 80211
303/455-8187

Florida
2650 S.W. 27th Ave., #303
Miami, FL 33133
305/567-9686

Illinois
4355 W. 26th Street, #3
Chicago, IL 60623
312/277-2513

Kansas/Missouri
3515 Broadway, Suite 201
Kansas City, MO 64111
816/561-0227

Garden City Community
College Library
801 Campus Drive
Garden City, KS 67846
316/276-9621

2409 N. Market
Wichita, KS 67219
316/838-4449

New Mexico
500 Second St., NW, #500
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505/243-3787

Pennsylvania
119 East Lehigh Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19125
215/423-4811

Texas
2701 Morgan Avenue, #200
P.O. Box 3028
Corpus Christi, TX 78404

2220 Broadway
Houston, TX 77012
713/641-2463

The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) has information on the more than 100 schools where at least one-quarter of the students are Latino. For a copy of a list of the schools and the majors they provide you can call or write HACU, 4204 Gardendale Street, Suite 216, San Antonio, TX 78229, phone 512-692-3805.

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute has an educational hotline especially for Hispanic students that your child can reach for free by calling 1-800 EXCEL DC (that's 1-800-392-3532). If you live in Washington, DC, call 202-543-1771. They can answer questions in English or Spanish. They will do a free search of over 1400 scholarship sources to choose those scholarships that your child qualifies for. Many of these scholarships are only for Hispanic or minority students. They will send information on these scholarships to your child so he can apply for them. In addition, they can provide:

- a list of books that are written to help students choose and apply to college,
- a sheet of tips for applying for financial aid,
- an up-to-date list of the books and guides to sources of financial aid, including aid especially for Hispanic and other minority students, and
- the *College Cost Planner*, a newsletter that offers advice on how to pay for a college education.

The federal government also has an educational hotline that your child can reach for free by calling 1-800-4 FED AID (that's 1-800-433-3243). Trained counselors can send information and application forms for all federal financial aid programs. They can also answer any questions you or your child have about qualifying for aid, and help you step-by-step if you get stuck while trying to fill out a form. They also have the numbers you can call in your home state for information on state financial aid.

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What is ASPIRA?

The ASPIRA Association, Inc. is the only national nonprofit organization devoted solely to serving and advocating on behalf of Puerto Rican and other Latino youth. With major programmatic efforts in leadership development and education, ASPIRA also conducts research and informs policymakers on issues critical to Latinos. Its offices are located in six states, Puerto Rico, and Washington, D.C. ASPIRA's central mission is advancing the development of the Latino community. To fulfill that mission, ASPIRA each year provides direct services to approximately 17,000 youth and their families.

ASPIRA Associate Offices are located in:
Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and Connecticut (affiliate office)

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